Mo Marshall M-6 (ca. 1910) 1923 AFI Burma
Karen AFI

CHAPTER I

HABITAT AND TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE KAREN

101 131 The Karen are a group of Indo-Chinese tribes living principally in Burma, the easternmost province of the British Indian Empire, in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, and in the adjoining country of Siam to the east. They are found between the tenth and twenty-first degrees of north latitude and between the ninety-fourth and one hundredth degrees of east longitude. The greater part of this territory they occupy in connection with the other peoples of the country, namely, the Burmese, Shan, Siamese, and Chin. ● 642 The only exclusively Karen country is the hilly region of the Toungoo district and the Karenni subdivision, where the Karen chiefs 161 of five states, comprising 4,830 square miles and a population of 42,240, are still in power under the Advisory Council of the British [583] Government. There is also a Karen chief ruling one of the Shan States, and five other states in that section are ruled by Taungthu chiefs. In all these latter districts we find a mixed population.[1]

101 197 The whole group of Karen tribes can be divided into three divisions, according to their language or dialect differences. These are the Sgaw, Pwo, and Bwe groups.

The Sgaw group is the largest and most widely scattered. They are found all through the Irrawaddy Delta, from the vicinity of Prome southward, and from the Arracan coast eastward to the neighborhood of Lakong in Siam and southward to the lowest point of the British possessions. The Paku and Mawnepgha tribes of the southern Toungoo Hills belong to this group. One dialect, with only slight variations, is used throughout this region.

The Pwo group comprises, besides the Pwo Karen, the Taungthu tribe, who call themselves the Pao. The Pwo are found along the seacoast from Arracan to Mergui and are said to be found nowhere more than fifty miles inland. However, I think that some of the Pwo villages in the Henzada district may be a little farther inland than that. The Taungthu are found in a section of country

[1] J. S. Scott: Burma, Appendix, pp. 479-481.